

February 2013



## *Highlight of the Month—African-American History*

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African-American History Month was the inspiration of Carter G. Woodson, a noted scholar and historian, who instituted Negro History Week in 1926. He chose the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of President Abraham Lincoln and the abolitionist Frederick Douglass.

The celebration was expanded to a month in 1976, the nation's bicentennial. Each February, Black History Month honors the struggles and triumphs of millions of American citizens over the most

devastating obstacles: slavery, prejudice, poverty as well as their contributions to the nation's cultural and political life.

The [Association for the Study of African American Life and History](#) (ASALH) has selected "At the Crossroads of Freedom and Equality: The Emancipation Proclamation and the March on Washington" as the 2013 theme for Black History Month.



Photo courtesy of ASALH

[Presidential Proclamation: National African American History Month, 2013](#)

[Presidential Proclamation: 100th Anniversary of the Birth of Rosa Parks](#)

## *From the President State of the Union Address*



When President Obama addresses leaders of the U.S. federal government he will be fulfilling a constitutional obligation and following a long-standing tradition of American presidents. The U.S. Constitution requires that the president report to Congress "from time to time" on the "State of the Union." This constitutional requirement has evolved into the president's annual State of the Union address, which now serves several purposes. The speech reports on the condition of the United States both domestically and internationally, recommends a legislative agenda for the coming year and gives the president the opportunity to personally convey his vision for the nation.

Follow the address LIVE on the Embassy's website on Wednesday, February 13, 6:00 a.m. (Mauritian time)

### **Live Stream of the State of the Union Address**

President Obama will deliver the annual State of the Union address at the House Chamber of the U.S. Congress on February 12.

Join us for a live [webcast](#) of this important speech as he outlines key priorities to a joint session of the 113th Congress.

Watch and discuss President Obama's achievements over the past year as well as his vision for America in 2013!

The event will also be streamed LIVE on the U.S. Embassy's [website](#) (click on the State of the Union spotlight).

Follow the conversation on Twitter by using the hashtag #SOTU.

## *E-Journal USA—Science: The New Frontier*

This issue of eJournal USA explores how science is conducted in the 21st century: How the Internet and other technologies are helping shape both the questions pursued by scientists and the ways in which scientists interact and share new knowledge. It also highlights some of the remarkable progress already achieved by

younger scientists in understanding the genesis of disease, our place in the universe and the circuitry of the brain.

Their scientific pursuits expand the horizons of human knowledge and hold promise for improving the lives of people today and far into the future.

[Read more](#)



## *In Brief*

### [George Washington Was Once a Teenager, Too](#)

On February 18, Americans will be celebrating the birthday of the "father" of their country, who was born in 1732. This federal holiday will be noted with special festivities at Mount Vernon, George Washington's estate and now a museum.

There the day will feature musical and military performances by the U.S. Army Old



### **Presidents Day: Honoring U.S. Presidents Washington and Lincoln**

Washington's Birthday is a U.S. federal holiday celebrated on the third Monday of February in honor of George Washington, the first president of the United States.

Increasingly, the holiday has become an occasion to celebrate the birthdays of both President George Washington and President Abraham Lincoln. Many Americans call the holiday Presidents Day.

Guard Fife & Drum Corps, a wreath-laying ceremony at Washington's tomb, and performances by re-enactors portraying "the general" and his contemporaries.

Mount Vernon, which welcomes an estimated 1 million visitors each year, has made special efforts to portray Washington as a flesh-and-blood patriot. To counter the

impression given by the stodgy, stern face of Washington found on the U.S. dollar bill, officials at the museum spent more than \$1 million for life-size sculptures like the one seen here, which portrays Washington as he might have looked at the age of 19 when he worked as a surveyor.

[Read more](#)

Learn more about George Washington at the [Mount Vernon website](#).

## *E-DOCS ALERT*

### **Island Nations Play China, India. YaleGlobal. Harsh V. Pant. January 9, 2013.**

As rising powers India and China compete for influence, Indian Ocean's small island states like Maldives, Seychelles or Mauritius gain disproportionate prominence and attract new funding for their strategic space in the Indian Ocean. In domestic politics, parties take advantage of the rivalry and take sides. A recent example described by Harsh V. Pant of King's College is the cancellation of a 25-year contract for two firms, one from India and the other from Malaysia, to operate and improve the Male airport in Maldives. "The largest Indian foreign direct investment in Maldives had huge symbolic importance for India's profile in the atoll nation," explains Pant. As China's profile rises in the Indian Ocean region, India's role is diminished. In some cases, the small island nations seek balance and resist allowing any great power to become too dominant. Yet other decisions for short-term gains may not ensure lasting security. *[Note: contains copyrighted material]*.

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/island-nations-play-china-india> [HTML format, various paging].

### **Southern Africa Regional Integration Strategy Paper 2011-2015. African Development Bank Group. June 5, 2011.**

The goal of the Southern African regional integration agenda is to create a fully integrated and internationally competitive region with the overarching objective of poverty reduction. This goal will be achieved progressively through the creation of a Free Trade Area (FTA) which will grow into a Customs Union, Common Market, Monetary Union, and finally the creation of the African Economic Community (AEC). According to the Bank's regional grouping, the RISP covers 12 countries: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. *[Note: contains copyrighted material]*.

<http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/2011-2015%20-%20Southern%20Africa%20-%20Regional%20Integration%20Strategy%20Paper.pdf> [PDF format, 66 pages].

### **Freedom of the Press 2011: A Global Survey of Media Independence. Freedom House. May 2, 2011.**

The number of people worldwide with access to free and independent media declined to its lowest level in over a decade, according to the study. It finds that a number of key countries, including Egypt, Honduras, Hungary, Mexico, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey, and Ukraine, experienced significant declines, producing a global landscape in which only one in six people live in countries with a press that is designated Free. *[Note: contains copyrighted material]*.

<http://freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=668> [HTML format with links].

### **Freedom of the Press Worldwide in 2011. Reporters without Borders. 2011.**

Several countries share first place in the index: Finland, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Norway and Iceland have always been among the countries sharing first position except in 2006 (Norway) and 2009 (Iceland). These six countries set an example in the way they respect journalists and news media and protect them from judicial abuse. They even continue to progress. Iceland, for example, is considering an exemplary bill, the Icelandic Modern Media Initiative (IMMI), that would provide a unique level of protection for the media. Sweden distinguishes itself by its Press Freedom Act, which has helped to create a particularly favourable climate for the work of journalists, by the strength of its institutions and by its respect for all those sectors of society including the media whose role in a democracy is to question and challenge those in positions of power. *[Note: contains copyrighted material]*.

<http://en.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/carte-2011.pdf> [PDF format, 1 pages].

[http://www.rsf.org/IMG/CLASSEMENT\\_2011/GB/C\\_GENERAL\\_GB.pdf](http://www.rsf.org/IMG/CLASSEMENT_2011/GB/C_GENERAL_GB.pdf) 2010 World Press Freedom Index. [PDF format, 19 pages].

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**Cyber-security Threat Characterisation: A Rapid Comparative Analysis. RAND Corporation. Neil Robinson et al. February 5, 2013.**

The study shows comparison of states' characterisation of cyber-security threats. It involves investigating three lines of enquiry related to the integration of cyber-security within broader national and transnational defence and security frameworks. The first part of the document summarises the findings and provides an overview of the scope and methodology of the research. The second part of the document describes the cyber-security strategies and approaches in ten case studies: Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Russian Federation, the UK and the USA. *[Note: contains copyrighted material]*.

[http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR200/RR235/RAND\\_RR235.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR200/RR235/RAND_RR235.pdf) [PDF format, 86 pages, 753.8 KB].

**Turning Ideas into Dollars: Four Revenue Success Stories. Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism. Mark Jurkowitz and Amy Mitchell. February 11, 2013.**

In America's embattled newspaper industry, some business innovations are showing clear signs of success, according to the report. While many of these are occurring on the digital side, some papers are generating new print revenue-through circulation gains, niche products and even sales reorganization. *[Note: contains copyrighted material]*.

<http://www.journalism.org/sites/journalism.org/files/NEWSPAPERREVENUEIDEAS.pdf> [PDF format, 35 pages, 921.71 KB].

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[http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR200/RR235/RAND\\_RR235.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR200/RR235/RAND_RR235.pdf) [PDF format, 86 pages, 753.8 KB].

**The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2013 to 2023. Congressional Budget Office. February 3, 2013.**

Economic growth will remain slow this year, CBO anticipates, as gradual improvement in many of the forces that drive the economy is offset by the effects of budgetary changes that are scheduled to occur under current law. After this year, economic growth will speed up, CBO projects, causing the unemployment rate to decline and inflation and interest rates to eventually rise from their current low levels. Nevertheless, the unemployment rate is expected to remain above 7½ percent through next year; if that happens, 2014 will be the sixth consecutive year with unemployment exceeding 7½ percent of the labor force--the longest such period in the past 70 years.

[https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/43907\\_Outlook\\_2012-2-5\\_Corrected.pdf](https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/43907_Outlook_2012-2-5_Corrected.pdf) [PDF format, 77 pages, 827.5 KB].

## *Events for the Month*

### **World Cancer Day, February 4**

World Cancer Day has been commemorated globally on February 4 since the 2000 World Summit Against Cancer. The United States government supports international efforts to raise cancer awareness and encourages continued endeavors to prevent, treat, and cure cancer.

[World Cancer Day](#)  
[U.S. Global Health Initiative](#)

### **International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting, February 6**

February 6 marks the tenth observance of the International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation, an internationally recognized day to foster awareness of the devastating effects of FGM/C and renew the call for the abandonment of this harmful traditional practice.

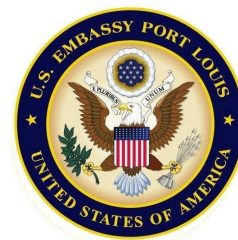
### **President's Day, February 18**

Also known as Washington's Birthday, this federal holiday is celebrated each year on the third Monday of February, though it was originally celebrated on George Washington's actual birthday of February 22nd.

All U.S. Government offices are closed.

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Contact US



*Embassy of the United States of America*  
**Information Resource Center**

*Phone: (230) 202 4444*

*Fax: (230) 212 2808*

*E-mail: [irc\\_portlouis@state.gov](mailto:irc_portlouis@state.gov)*

*[Embassy Website](#)*

*[Facebook](#)*